

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 422 148

RC 021 618

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TITLE Rural Education and Training in the New Economy: The Myth of the Rural Skills Gap.

SPONS AGENCY Cooperative State Research Service (USDA), Washington, DC.; Economic Research Service (USDA), Washington, DC.

ISBN ISBN-0-8138-2333-1

PUB DATE 1998-00-00

NOTE 199p.; For related document, see ED 398 018.

CONTRACT 92-37401-8281

AVAILABLE FROM Iowa State University Press, 2121 South State Ave., Ames, IA 50014-8300; phone: 800-862-6657; World Wide Web: www.isupress.edu (\$54.95).

PUB TYPE Books (010) -- Reports - Research (143)

EDRS PRICE Document Not Available from EDRS.

DESCRIPTORS Academic Achievement; Adult Literacy; Dropouts; *Education Work Relationship; Educational Attainment; Elementary Secondary Education; Employment Patterns; Higher Education; *Human Capital; Job Skills; Job Training; *Labor Force; National Surveys; *Rural Development; *Rural Education; Rural Population; Rural Schools; *Rural Urban Differences; Rural Youth

ABSTRACT

This book examines the education, training, and skill supply of the rural workforce; the role of rural workforce quality in rural development; and the barriers that prevent many rural people from obtaining the skills needed for good jobs. Data are drawn from large national surveys of schools, students, and households. The first three chapters address educational quality in rural elementary and secondary schools. Chapters 4-6 go beyond high school to examine college attendance, adult literacy, and job training. The final two chapters investigate employers' demands for labor and their perceptions of the rural workforce. Major themes emerging from the analyses were: (1) although rural higher education and job training are areas of weakness, rural school systems educate their students as well as do urban systems, with fewer resources; (2) institutions matter, and rural development strategies must support rural employers' shift to high-tech competitive strategies; and (3) in contrast to previous decades, rural employers' skill requirements are rising rapidly in the 1990s. Following an introduction by Paul L. Swaim, Robert M. Gibbs, and Ruy Teixeira, the chapters are: (1) "Rural Teachers and Schools" (Dale Ballou, Michael Podgursky); (2) "Educational Achievement in Rural Schools" (Elizabeth J. Greenberg, Ruy Teixeira); (3) "Rural High School Completion" (Kathleen M. Paasch, Paul L. Swaim); (4) "College Completion and Return Migration among Rural Youth" (Robert M. Gibbs); (5) "Literacy of the Adult Rural Workforce" (Elizabeth J. Greenberg, Paul L. Swaim, Ruy Teixeira); (6) "Job Training for Rural Workers" (Paul L. Swaim); (7) "Rural Employer Demand and Worker Skills" (Ruy Teixeira, David A. McGranahan); and (8) "Current Trends in the Supply and Demand for Education in Rural and Urban Areas" (David A. McGranahan, Linda M. Ghelfi). Contains references in each chapter, many data tables and figures, and an index. (SV)